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## PTI Leaders Removed from Key Parliamentary Positions in Pakistan

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The National Assembly (NA) Secretariat on Friday removed three senior Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members from significant parliamentary roles, following the disqualification of several party lawmakers in recent weeks.

Omar Ayub, who was serving as Leader of the Opposition in the NA, was stripped of his position. Zartaj Gul was removed as parliamentary leader, while Ahmad Chattha lost his role as deputy parliamentary leader. The removals are part of a wider shake-up in parliament after court rulings against PTI leaders.

Earlier this month, a special anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Faisalabad sentenced a number of PTI leaders to prison terms of up to 10 years over cases linked to the May 9 protests. Those convicted included Omar Ayub, Senate Opposition Leader Shibli Faraz, Zartaj Gul, MNA Sahibzada Hamid Raza, and former MNA Sheikh Rashid Shafiq. Out of 185 individuals implicated, 108 were convicted while 77 were acquitted.

Following these developments, the opposition leader's chamber was reclaimed by the NA. The Speaker informed the House of the members' disqualification under assembly rules, and discussions are ongoing between the opposition and the Speaker to select a new opposition leader. PTI-backed independent members will be required to submit fresh nominations for the posts of parliamentary and deputy parliamentary leader.

In addition, Ayub was removed from the Public Accounts Committee and the Finance Committee. Membership of 15 standing committees was withdrawn from seven PTI lawmakers. Sahibzada Hamid Raza lost the chairmanship of the Standing Committee on Human Rights, with Zartaj Gul also losing her membership in the same committee. Rai Hassan Nawaz was removed as chairperson of the Standing Committee on Railways.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had earlier disqualified several PTI members, prompting the NA changes. Meanwhile, legal actions against PTI figures continue. The ATC recently issued arrest warrants for 50 PTI leaders in multiple protest-related cases registered in Islamabad ahead of the party's planned August 5 protest.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain issued warrants naming high-profile figures, including former President Arif Alvi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur, Asad Qaiser, Hammad Azhar, Faisal Javed, Salman Akram Raja, Rauf Hassan, Murad Saeed, and Ahmad Niazi. Nine warrants were issued earlier in a case registered at Karachi Company Police Station, with the remaining 41 warrants following shortly after.

The political landscape remains tense as PTI faces both parliamentary and legal setbacks, with key leadership positions now vacant and court cases ongoing.